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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON CAFTA, MAY 11, 2005

1. On 05/10 the Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" published an editorial entitled "Lobby." "The presidents of the Central American region and Dominican Republic started their tour to promote CAFTA. Their first stop was Miami, where they met with Jeb Bush."

"The countries whose congresses ratified CAFTA are El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, while in Nicaragua there is a lot of opposition, especially because the majority of parliament is against the president."

"Now, the group of presidents is heading to Washington where they will meet with senators, congressmen and president Bush to dialog and discuss mutual benefits."

2. Op-ed by Rafael Antonio Delgado in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "La Prensa" entitled "Presidents on tour for CAFTA." "This tour shows the quality of the Central American governments, most of them are subordinate."

"The U.S. Media and organized labor unions have made a thorough assessment of CAFTA, which has been signed, above all, to further Bush's free trade agenda, in view of the delays experienced by the FTAA. Consequently, their idea was to start the weakest link: Central America."

"We are waiting to be embarrassed when we see the presidents 'holding hands' to promote a controversial treaty for Central American interests and which the North Americans aren't sure of the need for and the contribution to the development of its own people."

Pierce